
The New York Times condemns U.S. brain drain policy against Cuba

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A Cuban Brain Drain, Courtesy of the U.S.

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By THE EDITORIAL BOARD NOV. 16, 2014



An editorial published on November 17 by the U.S. newspaper, **The New York Times**, condemned the brain drain from Cuba stimulated by the United States, and in particular the program that encourages the migration of doctors to the U.S. during official missions abroad.

This is the sixth time in just over a month that the Editorial Board of the New York newspaper has addressed the issue of Washington's policies toward Cuba.

According to **The New York Times**, there is much to criticize in terms of failed U.S. policies regarding Cuba and the blockade it has imposed on the island for decades, but the program aimed at encouraging doctors to defect is particularly difficult to justify.

Entitled, "A Cuban Brain Drain, Courtesy of the U.S." and published in both English and Spanish, the paper recognizes that in 2014 alone, 1,278 Cuban doctors emigrated to the U.S., a record number according to figures from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The editorial further notes that between 2006 and 2014, Washington's illegal programs led to the migration of 5,490 Cuban doctors.

The Times points out the absurdity of Secretary of State, John Kerry, and U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power, praising the work of Cuban physicians caring for Ebola patients in West Africa, while continuing their plans to bleed Cuba of its medical strength.

"It is incongruous for the United States to value the contributions of Cuban doctors who are sent by their government to assist in international crises like the 2010 Haiti earthquake while working to subvert that government by making defection so easy ," the editorial underlines.

The piece recognizes that the U.S. immigration system should give priority to refugees and vulnerable persons persecuted across the world and that it should not be used to aggravate the brain drain of an adversarial nation, especially when improving relations between the two countries is a viable and sensible goal.

The newspaper also recalls that the program to rob Cuba of doctors began in August 2006, when the Cuban, Emilio González, strongly opposed to the government of the island, was in charge of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

At that time - the editorial continues - the government of President George W. Bush was attempting to sabotage the Cuban government, and facilitated the defection of doctors participating in missions abroad as a means to attack the island's main diplomatic tool and humiliate the Cuban Revolution. **The New York Times** highlights that Cuba has one of the highest rates of physicians per capita in the world and offers scholarships to study medicine to hundreds of students from different countries every year, among them some from the U.S.

The article also highlights Cuban medical efforts abroad, including almost 46,000 professionals working in Latin America and the Caribbean, and around 4,000 who are offering services in 32 African nations.

The editors of the New York newspaper argue that the U.S. policies encouraging a brain drain inhibit Cuba's capabilities when responding to international crises and do not help in the slightest to create a more open society.

"As long as this incoherent policy is in place, establishing a healthier relationship between the two nations will be harder," the paper emphasizes.
